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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/53/625/Add.3)*]

53/158. Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

The General Assembly,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] the International Covenants on Human Rights[2] and other human rights instruments,

Reaffirming that all Member States have an obligation to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to fulfil the obligations they have undertaken under the various international instruments in this field,

Mindful that the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party to the International Covenants on Human Rights,

Recalling its previous resolutions on this subject, including the most recent, resolution 52/142 of 12 December 1997, and taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/80 of 22 April 1998,[3]

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 3* (E/1998/23), chap. II, sect. A.

1. *Welcomes* the interim report of the Special Representative of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,[4] and takes note of the conclusion of the Special Representative that a political will exists to move Iranian society to a more tolerant and more peaceful condition but that, while some sectors are already benefiting from this progress, significant violations of human rights continue to occur;

2. *Welcomes also* the commitment made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to promote respect for the rule of law, including the elimination of arbitrary arrest and detention, and to reform the legal and penitentiary system, including the closure of detention centres outside the national prison system, and to bring it into line with international human rights standards in this field, and calls upon the Government to take all necessary steps in this regard;

3. *Welcomes further* the more open debate in the Islamic Republic of Iran on issues of governance and human rights, as well as governmental efforts to make progress in the area of freedom of expression, while remaining concerned at instances of arbitrary closure of publications, widely reported cases of harassment and persecution of persons, including writers and members of the press;

4. *Welcomes* a more positive approach by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to freedom of assembly, as well as the support given to the development of non-governmental organizations, and expresses the hope that freedom for political activities will become more effective;

5. *Notes with interest* the increasing focus of the Islamic Human Rights Commission on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the examination of individual complaints and training activities, and expresses the hope that the Commission will become a truly independent agency for the promotion and protection of human rights in line with the 1993 principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights;[5]

6. *Welcomes* the assurances given by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran that it has no intention of taking any action whatsoever to threaten the life of Salman Rushdie and those associated with his work or of encouraging or assisting anyone to do so, and that it disassociates itself from any reward offered in this regard and does not support it, but expresses its concern at continuing threats to the life of Salman Rushdie, including the announced increase in the bounty;

7. *Expresses its concern* at the continuing violations of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as reported by the Special Representative, in particular executions in the apparent absence of respect for internationally recognized safeguards, the use of national security laws as a basis for derogating from the rights of the individual, cases of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including sentences of stoning and amputation, as well as the failure to meet international standards in the administration of justice and the absence of due process of law;

8. *Also expresses its concern* at the discrimination against religious minorities and in particular remains gravely concerned at the unabated pattern of persecution against the Baha'is, in particular the execution and sentencing to death and arrests of members of the Baha'i community, and calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur of

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[4] A/53/423 and Corr.1, annex.

[5] Resolution 48/134, annex.

the Commission on Human Rights on religious intolerance relating to the Baha'is and to other religious minorities, until they are completely emancipated;

9. *Takes note* of statements made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran about the need to review laws and attitudes which discriminate against women, and, remaining concerned at the lack of full and equal enjoyment by women of their human rights, as reported by the Special Representative, calls upon the Government to take substantive and effective measures to eliminate discrimination in law and in practice against women;

10. *Calls upon* the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue its efforts and to abide by its freely undertaken obligations under the International Covenants on Human Rights[2] and under other international instruments on human rights, and to ensure that all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, including persons belonging to religious minorities, enjoy all the rights enshrined in those instruments;

11. *Also calls upon* the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to ensure that capital punishment will not be imposed for other than the most serious crimes, for apostasy, or otherwise in disregard of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[2] and United Nations safeguards, and to provide the Special Representative with relevant statistics on this matter;

12. *Further calls upon* the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to make full use of technical cooperation programmes in the field of human rights, and welcomes in this context the willingness of the Government to introduce international human rights standards into the curricula of universities;

13. *Deplores* the fact that no invitation has yet been extended by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Special Representative to visit the country, and calls upon the Government to extend an invitation to him and to resume its full cooperation with the Special Representative in the discharge of his mandate;

14. *Decides* to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Baha'is, at its fifty-fourth session under the item entitled "Human rights questions", in the light of additional elements provided by the Commission on Human Rights.

85th plenary meeting
9 December 1998